

enough U.S. troops to secure the country. Other mistakes followed, leaving security and political vacuums that were filled by foreign terrorists and domestic insurgents.

During the past 3 years, violence in Iraq has steadily increased and still threatens to rip the country apart. Like it or not, our courageous troops remain the only effective protections of the Iraqi people from civil war or anarchy and a lawless bloodbath.

Unfortunately, the bad conditions in Iraq today can become even worse—much worse—if our troops begin or complete their withdrawals before Iraqi forces are able to take their place. That training and equipping of Iraqi replacements should have been completed already, but it is not. I do not know what that timetable is. I am skeptical that anyone else in this body does. The Bush administration should tell us, but they will not, which means they still do not know either.

So it seems to me necessary not to decide and certainly not to act until we have that information. It is imperative not to make future mistakes that will compound the previous mistakes. And we certainly should not decide or act until we have listened to the current views of the top U.S. military commanders, who are responsible for successfully completing our mission in Iraq and for protecting the lives and safety of the 133,000 heroic Americans who are stationed there now.

I serve on the Senate Armed Services Committee, and yet I have not heard those top military views recently expressed.

I respectfully ask the distinguished chairman of our committee to arrange for us to hear them as soon as possible. I read a news report 2 days ago that General Casey, the senior American commander in Iraq, will brief the Secretary of Defense later this week on his newest thinking about U.S. force levels through the end of the year. I want to hear General Casey's recommendation myself and his reasons for it before I am prepared to vote on any proposal affecting U.S. troop levels. I want to give our military commanders in Iraq and our American troops in Iraq what they need to succeed now, 6 months from now, a year from now.

Like most Americans, I wish this war were over. I wish it hadn't begun. But we are in it; we must win it. We cannot leave Iraq until the Iraqi Government has established political control over its country and until the Iraqi security forces can protect their citizens. We cannot leave what we started to end in a lawless bloodbath.

We must rely on our senior military commanders to tell us what force strength they need to successfully complete their mission. The timetable we follow should be theirs, not ours. It should be based upon American security and Iraqi survival. Again, I respectfully urge Chairman WARNER to summon our top military commanders to tell us what they need and for how

long. I don't want any more incidents where American soldiers are captured, brutally tortured, and murdered because there were not enough of their fellow American soldiers there to defend them.

I agree with my colleagues about the urgent need for the new Iraqi Government to accelerate their assumption of complete responsibility for their country's services, security, and success. They need to tell us their expected schedule for doing so. We need to assist them in that process, and we need to enlist other nations to help them as well. We must complete our mission in Iraq as soon as possible, but we must complete it with a lasting victory, and we cannot leave until that victory is secure.

We should be discussing what we can do to hasten that day. The Bush administration should be telling us what we need to do to hasten that day, how to accelerate the transfer of responsibilities to Iraqis, how to accelerate the social and economic reconstruction of Iraq, how to enrich the lives of Iraqi citizens rather than the livelihoods of American contractors. Instead, all we get are cheap spin-and-thin slogans rather than substantive proposals and sophisticated solutions. The administration needs to set forth a plan of action in Iraq, a roadmap to final victory. That is what we should be debating. That is what we should be debating.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Minnesota. He will be departing our committee this fall, as he departs the Senate. I appreciate the work he has contributed to our committee throughout the year.

It is time for my distinguished colleague from Michigan, ranking member, and I to offer a package of amendments.

Mr. LEVIN. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. WARNER. Yes.

Mr. LEVIN. While he was making reference to the Senator from Minnesota, I think the chairman was off the floor when the Senator from Minnesota, Mr. DAYTON, made some very glowingly positive and affirmative remarks about our chairman and about how he was really delighted to be able to cosponsor the amendment which had been introduced to name this bill after our beloved chairman. I wanted to make sure that he was aware of that and could look up those remarks later.

Mr. WARNER. I was absent from the floor. I express my humble appreciation to my colleague from Minnesota. I recall that he accompanied Senator

LEVIN and me to Iraq one time. That was when I first became aware of the knowledge that he had on world affairs and other subjects. He has contributed to the greater good of the Committee on Armed Services. I thank him for his service. But there is more time; he has a little bit left to go.

AMENDMENTS NOS. 4492; 4493; 4494; 4266, AS MODIFIED; 4495; 4307, AS MODIFIED; 4326, AS MODIFIED; 4224; 4496; 4309, AS MODIFIED; 4345; 4368; 4497; 4222; 4498; 4499; 4202, AS MODIFIED; 4500; 4441; 4231, AS MODIFIED; 4409; 4501; 4502; 4503; 4504; 4505; 4506; 4331; 4507; 4508; 4509; 4510; 4219; 4386; 4511; 4197; 4512; 4513; 4514; 4515; 4342; 4365; 4241; 4220, AS MODIFIED; 4371; 4244; 4516; 4466; 4517; 4363, AS MODIFIED; 4450, AS MODIFIED; 4362, AS MODIFIED; 4275, AS MODIFIED; 4475, AS MODIFIED; 4276, AS MODIFIED; 4469, AS MODIFIED; 4477, AS MODIFIED; 4518; 4214; AND 4519, EN BLOC

At this time I send a series of amendments to the desk. They have been cleared by myself and the ranking member. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate consider the amendments en bloc, the amendments be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table.

Finally, I ask that any statements relating to any of the individual amendments be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendments were agreed to, as follows:

#### AMENDMENT NO. 4492

(Purpose: To clarify the contracting authority for the chemical demilitarization program)

At the end of subtitle F of title III, add the following:

#### SEC. 375. CHEMICAL DEMILITARIZATION PROGRAM CONTRACTING AUTHORITY.

(a) MULTIYEAR CONTRACTING AUTHORITY.—The Secretary of Defense may carry out responsibilities under section 1412(a) of the Department of Defense Authorization Act, 1986 (Public Law 99-145; 50 U.S.C. 1521(a)) through multiyear contracts entered into before the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—Contracts entered into under subsection (a) shall be funded through annual appropriations for the destruction of chemical agents and munitions.

#### AMENDMENT NO. 4493

(Purpose: To extend the authority for the personnel program for scientific and technical personnel)

At the end of title XI, add the following:

#### SEC. 1104. THREE-YEAR EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY FOR EXPERIMENTAL PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FOR SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL PERSONNEL.

Section 1101(e)(1) of the Strom Thurmond National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1999 (5 U.S.C. 3104 note) is amended by striking "September 30, 2008" and inserting "September 30, 2011".

#### AMENDMENT NO. 4494

(Purpose: To encourage the use of electronic voting technology and to provide for the continuation of the Interim Voting Assistance System)

On page 187, between lines 20 and 21, insert the following:

(c) USE OF ELECTRONIC VOTING TECHNOLOGY.—

(1) CONTINUATION OF INTERIM VOTING ASSISTANCE SYSTEM.—The Secretary of Defense shall continue the Interim Voting Assistance System (IVAS) ballot request program with